

nMIAMI COUNTY COUNCIL
25 NORTH BROADWAY
PERU, INDIANA 46970
November 12, 2014
WHEEL TAX MEETING

Council President Ralph Duckwall called the meeting to order and Councilman Wiles led the group in prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilman Hunt – Present
Councilwoman Harp – Present
Councilman Boyer – Absent
Councilman McAuliffe – Present
Councilman Wiles – Present
Councilwoman Mull – Present
Councilman Duckwall – Present

COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

MINUTES

None

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS/TRANSFERS

None

ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

None

PUBLIC HEARING ON LOCAL OPTION HIGHWAY USE TAX (LOHUT)

Patrick Conner, LTAP, came before the Council to explain the LOHUT tax, to them as well as the public. There are actually 2 taxes that fall under the LOHUT and both have to be adopted at the same time, you cannot do one without the other. The taxes are for different types of vehicles, so you would not be charged both taxes on one vehicle, it would be one or the other depending on the type of vehicle.

President Duckwall stated that the budget committee recommends \$20 per car and small truck with all other vehicles varying in cost. This would bring in approximately \$783,348.55 with the County's portion of that being approximately \$659,301.17.

Councilman Wiles asked what date it would take effect. President Duckwall replied that if it was passed between now and December 31st, it would take effect 2016.

Question: Does State keep some of the money?

Answer: Yes approximately \$25 on each one.

Question: Are there any other options?

Answer: There is a small amount in C.O.I.T that could be raised but it would bring in less money. This also helps the Highway with less funds being available for road repair.

Question: Has the Highway considered cutting back, such as not driving vehicles home?

Answer: The Highway Supervisor, the foremen and mechanics drive their vehicles home because they will probably be the first ones called out.

Question: Is it fair for me to have to pay an additional \$20 so I can drive my car out town to work because there are no jobs in Miami County? Why can't you make it a smaller amount for older

vehicles? Councilman Boyer stated that they started trying to get the wheel tax 9 years ago. They were told they would not get as much money back if they didn't implement a wheel tax and that seems to have been the case.

Question: Has the County considered being self-insured?

Answer: The County is self-insured and has been for approximately 30 years.

Question: Why is Miami County 5th out of 92 counties in highest taxes?

Answer: The full 1% of LOIT goes towards property tax relief as well as a part of CEDIT and a part of COIT, which is why there are a lot of people who pay no property tax and a large amount that pay under \$100 a year for property tax.

Prosecutor Bruce Embrey stated that he asked employees to attend this meeting because it could save their jobs. We have had to cut the Library, the Museum, lost 10 employees with an additional 5 employees being taken to part time. Public Safety has been affected by the cuts. We have cut everything to the bare bone so it is necessary to increase income.

Commissioner Francis stated that the County budgets are less than 8 years ago. They have been as many cuts as they possibly can and now they have to look seriously about raising revenue. They have a responsibility to keep the County running.

Councilwoman Harp stated that she will not support creating another tax. She requested it be on record that she does not feel it is right to lay off County employees and turn around and implement another tax on them.

A member of the audience stated that first, he appreciates that the Council still starts their meetings with a prayer and the pledge. Second he wanted to tell them that he has not had a raise in 6 years and has lost most of his benefits and they want to tax him more so he can pay for raises and benefits? President Duckwall stated that there are NO raises being given and that 49 out of the 92 counties in the State has implemented the wheel tax.

Mayor James Walker gave an over view of the issues caused with the implementation of the tax caps plus the exemptions and deductions that are available to taxpayers. It has caused a tremendous shortage to all units of government.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION/COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Councilwoman Mull made a motion to adjourn. Councilman McAuliffe 2nd the motion and it passed 6-0.

Respectfully submitted

Jane Lilley
Miami County Auditor